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Memo No. 1

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November 30, 1962
1:00 - 3:40 p.m.

LA Atom Free Zone

The United States:

The Secretary
The Under Secretary
Ambassador Thompson
Mr. Davis, EUR
Mr. Kamman, Interpreter

The Soviet Union:

First Deputy Premier A. Mikoyan
Ambassador Dobrynin
Mr. Kornienko, Counselor, Sov. E
Mr. Chistov
Mr. Vinogradov, Interpreter

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for list*

At a working luncheon for Soviet First Deputy Premier, Anastas Mikoyan, the Secretary turned the conversation, about dessert time, to a serious discussion of problems by remarking that the President thought some progress had been made in yesterday's conversation at the White House. Mr. Mikoyan responded he was very gratified if the President believed some progress had been made. He was under the same impression. He had been on the point of asking the President at the end of the discussion whether they had made any progress but decided not to do so. He, himself, however, felt we had achieved some progress and was glad that the Secretary had mentioned it.

The Secretary said we were seriously interested in the proposal for an atom free Latin America. In the long run this might provide mutual assurance which would give a feeling of security to these countries. In addition, we were interested in the words of Chairman Khrushchev who had spoken of measures against surprise attack, such as observers in key seaports, airports and rail centers. It was not clear to us whether Chairman Khrushchev looked on these measures as part of a complete package in the disarmament field or whether they were

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measures

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measures valuable in themselves which should be taken up immediately without waiting agreement on general and complete disarmament.

Mr. Mikoyan said he would not dwell on the history of disarmament negotiations. He thought disarmament was an important issue on which we should reach agreement. The arms race laid a very heavy burden on the Soviet Union and on the United States. For many years we have been conferring together. The Soviet Union had shown maximum flexibility, but they did not know where the United States and Western countries were moving. Though he did not wish to dwell on history, he wanted to mention missiles. First, the Soviet Union had agreed to destroy all missiles in the first stage of disarmament, but since the United States had certain apprehensions, it had made the Soviet position more flexible. Chairman Khrushchev then said a certain number of missiles could be retained during the first stage. However, up to now no counter-proposals had been made by the United States.

Mr. Mikoyan then referred to the Secretary's statement about United States interest in an atom free Latin America. He commented that the Brazilian proposal had been a good one in its first draft. But now it appeared that while the Latin American countries could not have atomic weapons on their territories, the United States could have on its bases in those countries. The Soviet Union could not support such a proposal, which is based on "what is bad for you is good for me". If, however, the proposal concerned all Latin American countries -- in other words, if the United States would not have nuclear weapons in those countries -- perhaps the Soviet Union could support the Brazilian resolution. He had the impression that Cuba would also favor it if the United States made clear, for instance, that no atom bombs would be in the Panama Canal Zone, and perhaps elsewhere. This would solve the problem of Cuba not having

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atomic weapons if other Latin Americans also did not. Mr. Mikoyan concluded he would like to touch on other things.

The Secretary responded he would like to come back to the Latin American atom free zone proposal. The Secretary commented that perhaps there was some misunderstanding and that our positions were not too far apart. If such an arrangement could be made, we would not expect to have nuclear weapons in Guantanamo, in the Panama Canal Zone or our base in Trinidad. However, this could not apply to Puerto Rico because it was part of the United States and we were not talking about an atom free United States. We would suppose that such an arrangement would ban atomic weapons from all existing and possible future bases, though he had nothing concrete in mind in speaking of future bases. Furthermore, we would expect that the Panama Canal Zone and Guantanamo would be subject to exactly the same kind of inspection as the rest of Latin American countries. The Secretary said, however, he would like to make one point quite clear. The prohibition against nuclear weapons would not apply to transit through the Panama Canal. For instance, we could not accept a prohibition on shipment through the Panama Canal of atomic weapons from the East Coast to our West Coast. The Secretary observed that when the Cubans responded to the LA atom free zone proposal, they had introduced elements which had nothing to do with an atom free zone. The Secretary concluded by saying he thought we needed to discuss this matter further; our two positions were not so far apart.

Mr. Mikoyan disclaimed knowledge of the details but expressed the opinion that basically the Cubans were in favor of this proposal. He said that he would report the Secretary's observations to Chairman Khrushchev, after which the Soviet Union would make a report.

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